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ABSTRACT

In Minnesota, democracy really works. A higher percentage of voters go to the polls, the business leaders genuinely care about the community, and the legislature works harder than most to provide for the people's welfare. Behind all of this is an energetic, well-educated citizenry who pay fairly high taxes and receive excellent services in return. If making lots of money and driving a fancy car are your goals, however, Minnesota is not the state for you. Income levels are moderate, and Minnesota is not in the top 10 states in terms of increased income (data from 1980-87). The excellent diversification of the state's economy was exemplified by its survival of the 1982 recession. Minnesota leads the nation in the percentage of young people who graduate from high school; however, demographics indicate some problems on the horizon. Youth poverty in the state has increased dramatically since 1980, and many women are raising children alone without much job skill training. Additionally, minority populations are concentrated in the Minneapolis and St. Paul city limits, and their movement to the wealthy and successful suburbs has been slow. Currently the state does not have a strategy for stemming this increase in poor children. (25 references) (KM)

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# MINNESOTA:

# THE STATE AND ITS EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

BY HAROLD L. HODGKINSON

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An on-line program called Cendata, available from Compu-Serve, has been invaluable in providing the most recent national data on state comparisons and Current Population Surveys.

These reports could not be produced without the excellent work of Louise Clarke, Chief Administrative Officer at IEL, and Tony Browder's graphics.

Finally, I need to pay tribute to my sister, Molly LaBerge, Director, COMPAS, lifelong resident and supporter of Minnesota, who has added much to my knowledge of the state and its educational system.

The selection and interpretation of information used in this report, however, remain the responsibility of the author.

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**COVER NOTE:**

This "people map" of Minnesota shows some very interesting things. First is the linking of state populations to North Dakota, and even more importantly, to Wisconsin. One can *begin* to see the emergence of a density corridor from Rochester to St. Cloud, although the baby has not been born yet. Although half of Minnesota is in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metro, about a third of the state's population does not live in metro areas at all. Rural life is alive and well. These people maps are the equivalent of rivers and roads on a normal map, and are useful to planners, marketers of goods and services, and, increasingly, to educators!

# MINNESOTA:
## *THE STATE AND ITS EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM*

**HAROLD L. HODGKINSON**
*Director*
*Center for Demographic Policy*
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# MINNESOTA—THE STATE AND ITS EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Normally, when doing a state profile, one tries to begin by saying some highly complimentary thing. Generally the one thing has to do with good housing in peaceful neighborhoods, cultural activities, recreational opportunities close to home, efficient transportation systems with few jam-ups, job opportunities, good schools, low crime rates, good health care, etc. Minnesota's "problem" is that it scores very high in *all* of these dimensions of quality of life, leaving an analyst to search for something bad to say to balance out the picture. The obvious choice is weather, but actually many states have worse. (As one who grew up in the state, I never minded the winters as much as the summer mosquitoes which were large enough and numerous enough to carry away small children and middle-size dogs. You can't have 10,000 lakes without also having 10,000 mosquitoes per capita.) If one wants to feel really cold outdoors, your best bet is the lakeshore in Chicago. If an objective negative measure is desired, the only clear choice is that Minnesota ranks either second or third in Radon, a heritage from glacial times.

If the weather is so bad, why does Minnesota normally beat the nation in terms of registered voters showing up at the polls? Even with both Minneapolis and St. Paul public schools approaching "minority majorities," the state nevertheless beats the nation in the percentage of youth who graduate from high school. One cannot conceive of a spoils system taking control of Minnesota politics—the tradition of independent political decisions made by the voter carries through to a legislature unusually dedicated to carrying out the public will and providing high quality public services. Minnesota is simply an activist state—from attending plays and concerts at the Guthrie and Ordway Theatres, to "the cabin at the lake" where most Minnesotans hunt and fish very energetically, to the winter and summer festivals which attract much of the population, to the voting booth—it's all the same phenomenon: energetic, involved citizens. Cynicism and passivity, especially about politics, are not Minnesota traditions. Reactions to the 1988 difficulties at the University of Minnesota were disbelief and shock, not the Eastern version of "I told you so" or "What can you expect?"

There is a small mystery to this—if life is so magnificent in Minnesota, why do so few people move in? Weather, fairly high taxes and housing costs are usually given as the answer, but it may well be that there is more to the story. Corporations move into the state quite regularly, but Minnesotans often have a paranoia that these same corporations will leave. What's behind this? Although unemployment rates in the state are very low, small towns around Hibbing continue to have massive unemployment. Why do these rates continue to stay so very high? And for a state that prides itself on its middle-class majority of all ethnic backgrounds, why is Franklin Avenue still a problem area for Native Americans and immigrants? (It is also the home of the American Indian Business Development Corporation, but the problems remain.)

Our task here is not to evaluate the state, but rather to comprehend its demographic realities, the context for its educational system. In order to do this, we need to look first at some basic data on the state, using national data sources for comparisons when possible. (See page 2.)

If one were to try to weave a tapestry from these statistical threads, it would look something like this: Minnesota is a mid-sized state with a very large population of native born people, a very high percentage of people in the work force, a very small amount of ethnic diversity except in the Twin Cities metro, a comparatively large rural population (particularly for Swedish residents), and comfortable population densities which allow people to know each other yet have enough "marketing mass" to support a variety of goods and services.

In terms of problems, births to teenage mothers are the lowest percentage in the nation, rates of births to unmarried parents are very low, as is infant mortality in the first year of life, due to the large number of physicians and their dispersion throughout the state. The state is a little below average on crimes and 50th on prisoners, with a very small increase in prisoners since 1980, about one third of the national increase. This frees a large number of tax dollars, as we spend almost $24,000 a year on each prisoner in the U.S., a larger number of tax dollars than is spent on any other major client group. Think of the schools we could run if we had $24,000 per child, against our current national level of $3,970! (Each Minnesota prisoner uses enough money to prevent seven children from participating in a Head Start program, or six young people from attending a state college. In Pennsylvania, it

## A MINNESOTA PROFILE

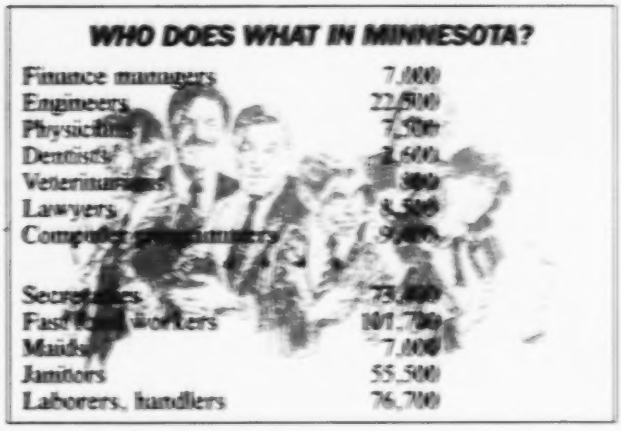
| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1987 Population | 4,246,000 | 21st |
| Population Change, 1980-87 | +4.2% | 30th |
| 1987 People per Square Mile | 53 | 32nd (New Jersey: 1,027) |
| 1986 Metro Population | 65.8% | 28th |
| 1980 Born In Another State | 25.3% | 41st |
| 1987 Popul | 26.3% | 28th |
| 1987 Popul | 12.5% | 19th |
| 1987 Perce | | 6th (U.S. 75.6%) |
| 1987 Anglo | | 7th (U.S. 69.5%) |
| 1986 Birth R | | |
| 1986 Percen | | |
| 1986 Percent | | |
| 1986 Abortion | | |
| 1987 Infant M | | |
| 1987 Doctors p | | |
| 1987 Crime Ra | | |
| 1987 Prisoner I | | |
| 1980-86 Increa | | 46th (U.S. + 65.7%) |
| 1986 Taxes per C | | 5th |
| 1986 Governmen | | 4th |
| 1987 Social Secu | | 32nd |
| 1986 Total Em | | 19th |
| 1980-86 Manufacturing Jobs | | 16th (U.S. – 6.4%) |
| 1980-86 Service Jobs | | 35th (U.S. + 29.1%) |
| 1986 Personal Income Per Capita | | 15th |
| 1980-86 Per Capita Income Change | | 22nd |
| 1986 Energy Consumption Per Capita | | 30th |
| 1987 Percent Nuclear Power | | 9th |
| 1987 Motor Vehicles per 1,000 | | 12th |
| 1986 Accidental Deaths per 100,000 | | 41st |
| 1982-86 Retail Sales Per Capita | | 11th |
| 1986 Farm Cash Receipts | $6,074M | 6th |
| 1985-86 Home Sales Change | + 31.0% | 1st |
| 1985-86 New Housing Starts | + 14.8% | 16th |

is seven times as expensive to have someone in the state pen as it is to have someone at Penn State.)

Although most Minnesotans are not rich, a very small percentage are eligible for poverty or social security programs—most are "paying their way." Personal income has increased slowly. Although the tax rate is high, the rate of delivered services is a little higher. As in Scandinavia, high tax payments are matched by the delivery of very high quality services. Average citizens get a little more back than they paid for. The Minnesota economy

has much diversification, one of the keys to a sound future. Farms are very profitable, retail sales have grown very rapidly since 1980, the manufacturing sector lost fewer jobs than the nation while the Minnesota service sector added a number of jobs, although fewer than the nation. Homes sales went up faster than anywhere else in the nation, while new housing starts (a good economic predictor) increased very rapidly, suggesting that in the future, housing costs will not increase rapidly due to a declining supply of housing stock, as is now the case in Boston, Washington, Los Angeles and San Francisco.

Even in Minnesota, however, the low end of the service economy is creating a very large number of new jobs that don't pay very well, and have little advancement potential, as the next chart indicates:




*Occupational Outlook Quarterly*, Winter, 1986

Even in the Minnesota economy, for every *new* job for a computer programmer, there are about nine new jobs for cashiers! The fact that there are about as many jobs for maids as for doctors suggests something about the Minnesota job structure, and eventually about its income and mobility structures.

Even with the weather, or maybe because of it, Minnesotans are very frugal in their use of energy, a high percentage of which is derived from nuclear sources. Highways are important to Minnesotans, who have a very high rate of vehicle ownership. Remember that a rate of 842 vehicles per 1,000 people includes 250 little kids who aren't allowed to own or drive a car, at least 50 elderly who *can't* drive and about 50 who choose not to, which changes the reality to 842 vehicles per *650* people who can own/drive them! One suspicion is that with the great importance Minnesotans place on recreational activity, a lot of these vehicles are RV's. Even with all these vehicles wheeling around, the accidental death rate is very low. Accidental deaths are caused by drinking, driving and shooting, especially when all three occur at the same time. Very few Minnesotans do all three at once.

Another thing about Minnesota, surprising to some, is the fact that, according to *American Demographics*, the state is now 18th in terms of the number of immigrants who move there (1987), about 5,380 every year. In fact, the Minneapolis-St. Paul metro is the *second* largest place for Laotians to immigrate in the nation. The state is very high in immigrants from Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, South Korea and Vietnam. One aspect of this success story is the effort made by Minnesota churches and service groups to find homes for refugee children. (One of the most deeply moving things to observe in the state is the welcoming of Asian refugee children at the Minneapolis airport by their new parents. No one knows exactly how to behave on either side, but there is an enormous amount of love in the atmosphere. This faith in pluralism, even in a state which doesn't have a lot of it, is one reason why America should have a major resurgence in the next century, when pluralism skills should lead to economic and social progress, as well as increased world leadership.)

Cold weather has even become a major force for innovation in the state. Like Middletown in Ohio, Manlcato has completely enclosed its main streets; Edina built the first enclosed, climate-controlled shopping center more than 30 years ago, the bridges across the Mississippi to the "U" have been heated and enclosed for several decades, and in 1990, Bloomington will open the largest "mall" on the continent, except for the Edmonton original which has 800 shops, 100 restaurants, 20 theatres, a 10 acre water park, a golf course and hotel, all under one roof and climate controlled! Merely outfitting people for active outdoor activity is a profitable venture, especially now that Gore-Tex has arrived, as well as new chemicals which absorb heat at one temperature and release it at a higher one, giving each garment its own "thermostat." Already here are "Intimits" which are connectable mittens, allowing lovers to hold hands outdoors. Minnesotans have done well at creating a major market out of winter.

Although Minnesota has six metro areas (and four of the six are shared with a neighboring state, as our cover map indicates), the Minneapolis-St. Paul-Minnesota-Wisconsin metro represents about half of the state's population, and is crucial for the state's economy. The metro has come a long way from the milling-agricultural transport economy of 50 years ago. Today, the metro serves markets from local to international with a wide variety of business and professional services. Having the state capital in the metro provides a constant supply of interesting and well-paid government jobs, making this the 11th largest metro economy in the nation and certainly one of the largest "Heartland" economies. Although hit hard by the 1982 recession, especially in durable goods manufacturing, the economy has surged ahead in business and financial services, even while the computer industry was encountering a shakeout.

The area is becoming the financial center of the Northwest central region. This, added to the large number of companies which have located in the metro, have increased, and will continue to increase the demand for business and financial services, the key to the resiliency of economies like New York and Chicago. The young and highly educated work force (usually educated at the University of Minnesota, handily within the metro) will continue to earn higher wages in this expanding business services market. This metro is in the top five in the nation in terms of the

educational level of its work force, a key advantage. Even the recent declines in the computer manufacturing industry haven't dented the overall metro economy, due to the success of other market sectors. Nothing beats diversification.

One of the mainstays of the metro economy over the years has been the outstanding performance of the University, particularly its Schools of Agriculture, Engineering, Law, Medicine and Business, in creating a cadre of excellent professionals who are the state's major resource. Unlike many universities which ignore the locale in which they exist, the "U" has always been an integral player in the metro, as well as the state.

The economy will encounter further transition, particularly a decline in the importance of manufacturing. From 1979 to 1986, employment in durable goods manufacture fell by 8,000 people. New sources of jobs show these "winners" from 1983-87:

| | |
|---|---|
| State, local government workers | + 29,221 |
| Business services | + 22,683 |
| Building contractors | + 17,632 |
| Health, educational services | + 17,628 |

However, the high tech manufacturing base is already beginning to "come back" at the end of 1988, and is expected to be a major source of rapid growth in the next few years, particularly in the computer and related fields. The number of corporate headquarters will likely increase as well. In addition, Minneapolis-St. Paul represents a great transportation resource for barge, air, highway and rail. Fourteen barge lines and 120 tons of river terminal capacity plus access through the continental river system as well as the Mississippi give unmatched barge transport, while Northwest and 24 other carriers use the airport. Burlington Northern (with headquarters in St. Paul) plus 11 other railroads provide rail service while 150 trucking firms use the excellent highways, using 94 and 35 for wide access, and 494 and 694 for access to the metro's core cities.

Oddly enough, the location of the metro is both a blessing and a problem. Only 11.4% of the nation's employed population is within 500 miles, making this MSA rather isolated. Wholesale trade is tied very heavily to agriculture, so that as agriculture goes in the Heartland, so goes, to some extent, the health of this metro. Both cost of living and wage rates are quite high, which may discourage some employers from locating in the metro, even though the very well-educated work force and excellent distribution system, plus high quality infrastructure and services, should override these factors in most cases.

This analysis has left out the other five metro areas, most of which overlap with neighboring states as our cover map shows. In addition, there is a demographic increase in density which is filling in the metros from Rochester to St. Cloud, which could become a major combined metro area in the near future. One clear indicator of this is the increased enrollment at St. Cloud State—for many residents of the rapidly expanding northwestern suburbs of the Minneapolis-St. Paul metro, St. Cloud is now a closer university than the main campus of the "U." Should this development continue, the combined metro would be a formidable economic power, with world-level expertise in medicine, a variety of technologies and manufacturing processes, educational institutions and educated people. As this is being written, it is too early to say when (or whether) this new "CMA" (Consolidated Metro Area) will be hatched. Current satellite pictures taken at night do not indicate that the densities merit current consideration of a single Rochester-St. Cloud CMA, although there is a lot of variable increase. (There are some very specific financial consequences of becoming a CMA, as far as the federal government is concerned.) Stay tuned.

## A Minnesota Family Portrait

Given that Minnesota is indeed a "Heartland" state with a strong commitment to traditional values, a look at demographic changes within the Minnesota family might be in order before we discuss the educational system. Although there are any number of excellent statistical and analytical resources in Minnesota, our interest in national comparisons has suggested the use of a new analysis from the Population Reference Bureau, based on Current Population Survey (CPS) figures.

These numbers suggest rather stable families with some rapid shifts in certain areas, particularly children in poverty, going from 104,000 children in 1980 to 238,000 in 1987, according to the CPS data. As is common, the youth population is becoming ethnically diverse more rapidly than the adult population. The percentage of single parent families, while below the national average, is increasing faster than the nation. (The number of married couples who are now in a second marriage for at least one partner cannot be derived from these data, but nationally more than a third of all marriages is a second marriage for at least one member.)

This also suggests an increase in *families in poverty*, particularly those headed by a single female who is working full time. As of Fall, 1988, the most rapidly growing part of the homeless population in America is families with children in which at least one member works full time. However, if you are a woman taking care of children by yourself, with little or no job training, one income in the bottom of the service economy will not support you and your child (children). Indeed, in 1987, 3.5 million Americans worked full time, yet were eligible for poverty benefits. One wonders what kind of a job this represents. Although we are doing some supposing here, small changes in family structure can generate large increases in children being reared in poverty, particularly through single parent families of whatever ethnic background, even though black women are more vulnerable to poverty when raising their children. In a state in which family income has been so overwhelmingly middle class, these increases in youth poverty tend to stand out. The state's educational system should be seen as an arena in which all these people are playing out their parts.

## *Minnesota Populations by Family Type*

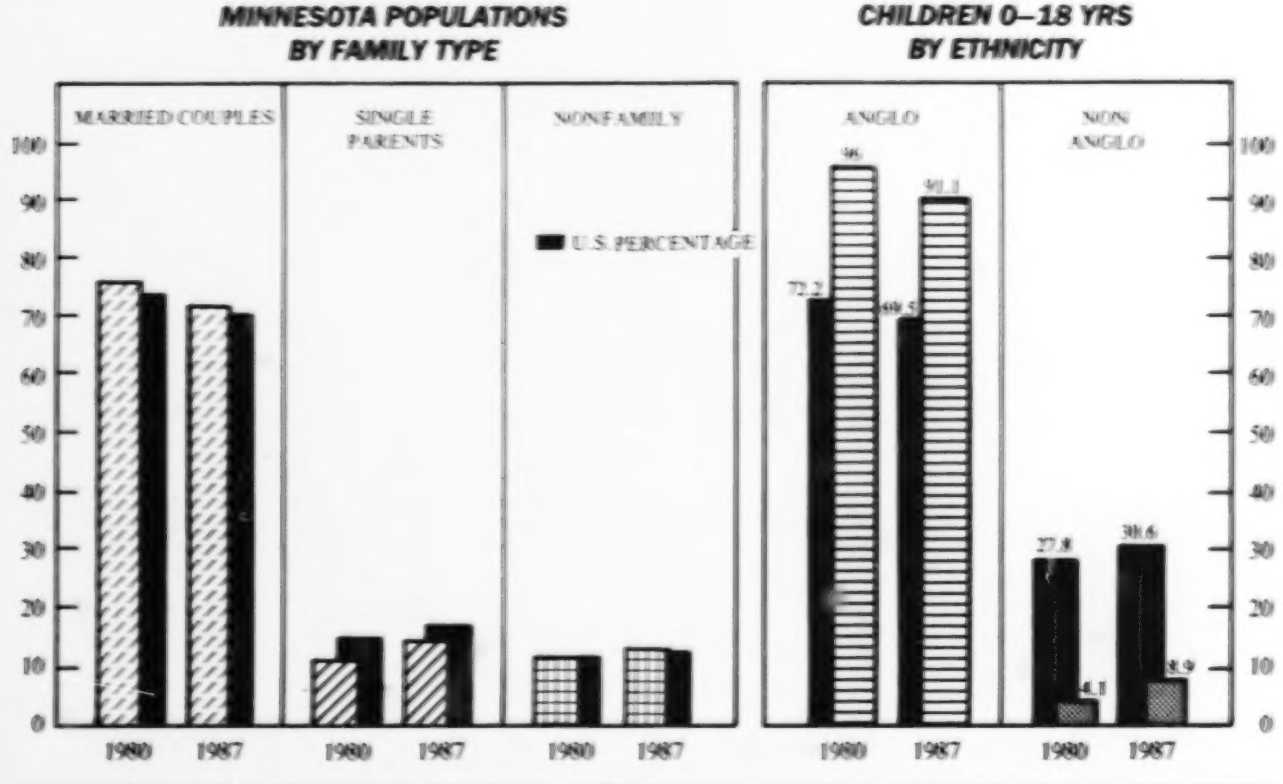
| | Married Couples | Single Parents | Nonfamily |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1980 | 77% (U.S. 73.6%) | 11.4% (U.S. 14.8%) | 11.6% (U.S. 11.6%) |
| 1987 | 71.8% (U.S. 70.2%) | 14.7% (U.S. 16.8%) | 13.5% (U.S. 13.0%) |
| | | **Children 0-18 yrs.** | |
| 1980 | 84.8% (U.S. 78.2%) | 13.7% (U.S. 20.7%) | 1.6% (U.S. 1.1%) |
| 1987 | 81.9% (U.S. 75.0%) | 17.1% (U.S. 23.7%) | 1.0% (U.S. 1.3%) |

| | Poverty—Total | Poverty-Children (0-18yrs.) |
|---|---|---|
| 1980 | 7.4% (U.S. 11.8%) | 8.7% (U.S. 16.5%) |
| 1987 | 12.5% (U.S. 13.7%) | 20.9% (U.S. 20.5%) |

**Population by Ethnicity**

| | Anglo | Hispanic | Black | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1980 | 96.9% (U.S. 78%) | 0.7% (U.S. 6%) | 1.2% (U.S. 11.4%) | 1.1% (U.S. 4.6%) |
| 1987 | 94.6% (U.S. 75.6%) | 1.0% (U.S. 7.9%) | 2.2% (U.S. 11.9%) | 2.2% (U.S. 4.7%) |

| | Children 0-18 yrs. by ethnicity | |
|---|---|---|
| 1980 | 96% Anglo (U.S. 72.2%) | 4.1% non-Anglo (U.S. 27.8%) |
| 1987 | 91.1% Anglo (U.S. 69.5%) | 8.9% non-Anglo (U.S. 30.6%) |

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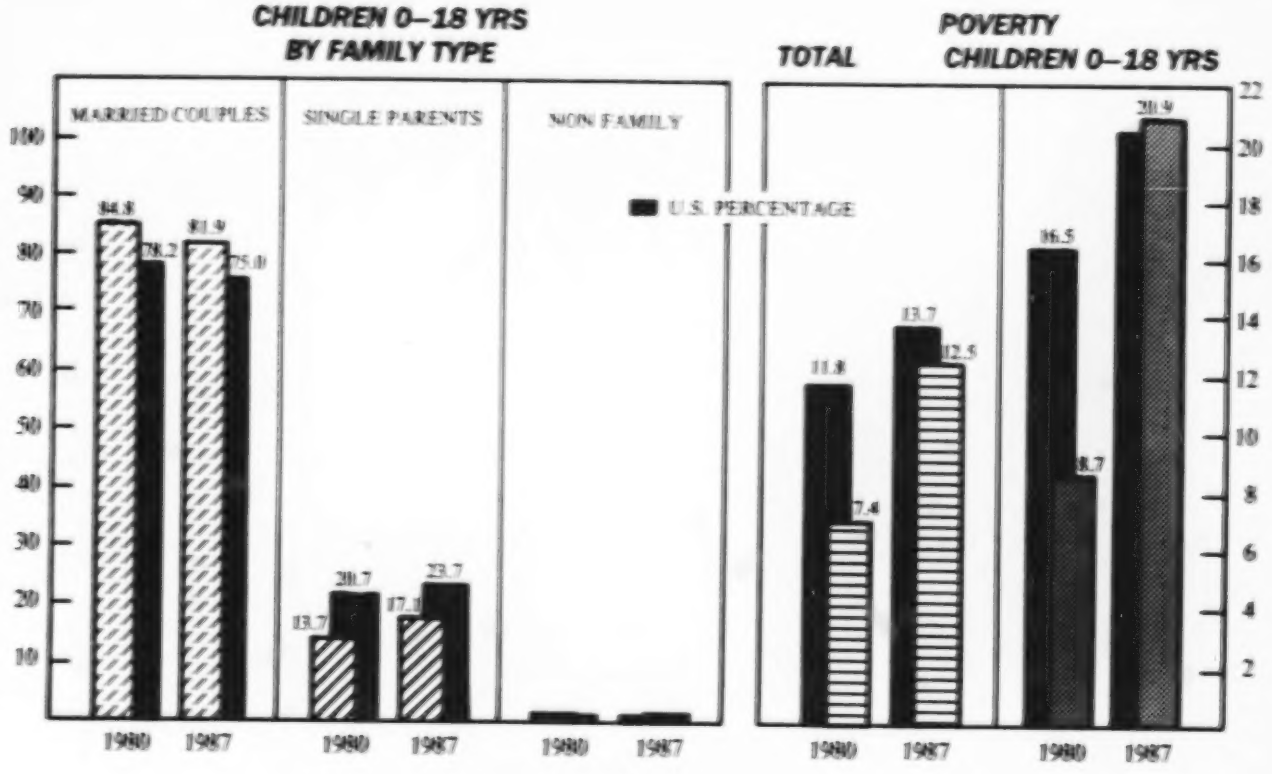
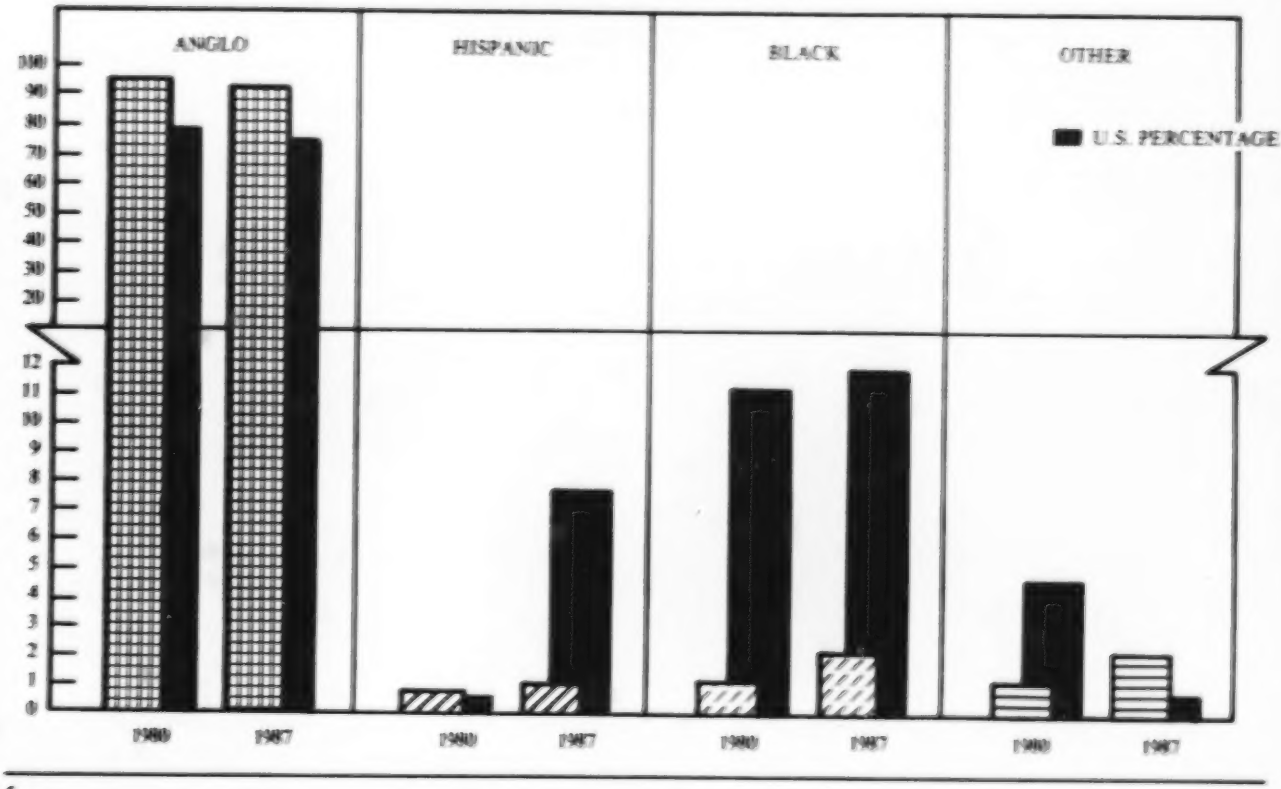

CHILDREN 0–18 YRS
BY FAMILY TYPE
MARRIED COUPLES
SINGLE PARENTS
NON FAMILY
U.S. PERCENTAGE
84.8
78.2
81.9
75.0
13.7
20.7
17.1
23.7
1980
1987
POVERTY
TOTAL
CHILDREN 0–18 YRS
11.8
7.4
13.7
12.5
16.5
8.7
20.9
1980
1987


POPULATION BY ETHNICITY
ANGLO
HISPANIC
BLACK
OTHER
U.S. PERCENTAGE
1980
1987

## MINNESOTA'S EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

| | 1981-82 | 1986-87 |
|---|---|---|
| Elementary enrollment | 364,270 | 384,735 |
| Secondary enrollment | 368,767 | 324,809 |
| Total | 733,037 | 709,544 |
| | | 716,305 Fall, '88 (est.) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1982 sophomores graduating in 1986 | 91.4% | 1st |
| Per pupil expenditure, 1987 | $4,241 | 15th |
| Per capita income, 1987 | $14,994 | 16th |
| Teachers salary, 1987 | $29,140 | 11th |
| Pupil teacher ratio, 1987 | 17.4 | 28th |

| | 1973-74 | 1985-86 |
|---|---|---|
| Federal funds for education | 4.7% | 4.2% |
| State funds for education | 58.1% | 54.4% |
| Local funds for education | 37.1% | 41.3% |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Private school enrollment, 1980 | 88,965 | |
| Catholic | 64,418 | |
| Other | 24,548 | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Children in poverty, 1987 | 9.5% | 48th |
| Handicapped children, 1987 | 11.6% | 17th |
| Minority students, 1987 | 6.6% (45th) (black, 2.4%, Hispanic 0.9%, Asian 2.0%, Native American, other 1.3% (1984 data) | |
| ACT scores, 1987 | (35% of seniors) 20.2 (3rd) | scoring over 26: 6th |
| Students taking Advanced Placement courses, 1987 | 4.5% | 36th |

### *Minnesota's Educational System*

One major clue to the above is to think of a "left-over" decline in older student populations working its way out of the system at the top, while younger students, entering the system at the bottom, are increasing. (Indeed, we know that this trend will continue, as the Minnesota population of people under five years of age went from 307,000 in 1980 to 324,000 in 1986. The future clearly shows increases in the system for at least a decade, even as the school-age population declines from 865,000 in 1980 to 786,000 in 1986, according to the Population Reference Bureau.

In most states, ethnic diversity of youth is up to twice that in the adult population of the state. In Minnesota, that does not seem to be the case. In addition, minority populations are heavily concentrated in the Minneapolis and St. Paul school districts. Minneapolis is reported to have a 51 percent minority student registration (the October 13, 1987 Sight Count showed 17,872 minority students, or 45 percent), while St. Paul schools are 36.5 percent minority, 63.5 percent white, according to *Pocket the Facts about St. Paul Schools, 1988-1989*. While minority populations in these two city school systems are quite high, state school population figures are much lower.

Both Minneapolis and St. Paul city systems make heavy and creative use of magnet schools and other arrangements that increase students and parents choices in terms of educational alternatives. Partly as a result, private school enrollments, which have been over the national average of 12 percent, have begun to decline. (How much of this is due to Catholics and others returning their children to public schools and how much to fertility changes in various subpopulations is very hard to fathom.)

There is little doubt that Minnesota has led the nation for some years now in the percentage of young people who graduate from high school. It does so without "budget-busting" amounts of money, with class sizes which are very close to the national average, with good teachers who nevertheless seem quite like good teachers in other states. How does Minnesota come out so well? The answer can be found in the following table:

**Percentage Graduating from High School, 1986**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Minnesota | 91.4% |
| 2. Connecticut | 89.8% |
| 3. North Dakota | 89.7% |
| 4. Nebraska | 88.1% |
| 5. Iowa | 87.5% |
| 6. Montana | 87.2% |
| 7. Wisconsin | 86.3% |
| 8. South Dakota | 81.5% |
| 9. Kansas | 81.5% |
| 10. Wyoming | 81.2% |
| 11. Ohio | 80.4% |
| 14. Pennsylvania | 78.5% |
| 16. New Jersey | 77.6% |
| 39. Alabama | 67.3% |
| 40. Rhode Island | 67.3% |
| 41. California | 66.7% |
| 42. Nevada | 65.2% |
| 43. South Carolina | 64.5% |
| 44. Texas | 64.3% |
| 45. New York | 64.2% |
| 46. Mississippi | 63.3% |
| 47. Arizona | 63.0% |
| 48. Georgia | 62.7% |
| 49. Louisiana | 62.7% |
| 50. Florida | 62.0% |

It should be clear that what "wins" is not Minnesota but a *region*, with the exception of Connecticut. All of the best are Midwest, rural (but not rural poor), small cities, towns, schools and classes. (There have been few attempts to relate class size to graduation rates, but I am convinced that it works.) It is hard for a young person to be anonymous in these states—if you decide to play hookey, some adult who knows you by name is likely to spot you within fifteen minutes. Just below the ten best are three states that should be near the bottom—Ohio, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. All are ethnically diverse, much youth poverty, lots of manufacturing, big cities, etc., yet they do very well at graduating people. New Jersey, Ohio and Pennsylvania work at it through their chief state school officers, but in addition, there is a stereotype that you need a high school diploma to get a job in the mill-factory, but not college. As a result, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New Jersey are very high on high school graduates, low on attendance at college.

At the low end, one sees very high incidence of childhood poverty (except for New York), large cities, ethnic diversity, and rapid social change, unlike the "Heartland" states at the top. It should be pointed out that Florida now leads the nation in high school dropouts and in prisoners! We have already seen the relation between the two. The sad thing is that we know enough to be able to get the attrition rates in Georgia and Texas up to the Minnesota level of high school graduation, but there is no national imperative to do it, even though it is crystal clear that *no one* benefits from having a young person drop out of school. Given that our "crop" of adolescents continues to decline until about 1994, we will need every one of our small band of youth to succeed—we can't throw any away. *Picking* winners isn't enough—we have to *make* winners as well.

When one looks at this kind of table, the conclusion seems clear—regardless of the excellence of Minnesota's system of public education, its superiority in terms of graduation rates is as much a function of the populations served (and the parents and families that back them up) as it is the excellence of teaching, curriculum or administration. As time goes on, the Minnesota populations may come to include more "at-risk" children, particularly increases in childhood poverty, which may test the system more severely than at present. To the state's credit, its excellent data and research services are scanning the educational environment regularly, so that Minnesota has more lead time to deal with these issues than most other states. But some parts of Minnesota have almost no experience with the more diverse populations served by Minneapolis and St. Paul schools, and the temptation will be to look down on these city schools as being inferior, when actually they may be doing a superior job with a large number of at-risk children.

Today we can locate sizeable black and Hispanic middle class populations, living in the suburbs in varying proportions, from 46 percent of Miami's black citizens in suburbs to Chicago's 9 percent. Minneapolis and St. Paul have not led the nation in terms of minority access to suburban housing; indeed, here is an issue that should get all sections of the state's leadership together. Obviously suburbs can be segregated too, so that access to suburbs is not a cure-all. But without it, minorities are denied choice. This is particularly important as *jobs* move to today's suburbs—if you are trapped in a core city and can't get to the new suburban job, that job is useless to you. The Twin Cities are loaded with "suburban growth corridors" from Wayzata Boulevard to St. Croix. In Washington, D.C., almost *half* of all new jobs are being created outside the beltway, while in Chicago, half of all commuters are going from a suburban home to a suburban job.

Gary Orfield's excellent research has shown us that when whites move out of a city, the population does not become all black, it becomes ethnically diverse. If one looks at Asians, Native Americans (clearly the most neglected minority in the nation) and Hispanics, one sees populations that are slowly growing and will continue to do so. It is important for many reasons that children experience some diversity in background in their school. Growing up in St. Louis Park, I did not even talk to a black person until I was fifteen-years-old, and that was not a schoolmate. These issues need to be framed with care: ethnically diverse populations will increasingly seek access to Minnesota's suburban communities, particularly for their excellent schools. The schools need to be prepared to make this an excellent experience for everyone.

Orfield's data for Minneapolis shows 10,499 black students enrolled in 1986-87, 57.2 percent in majority white

schools and only 0.3 percent in 90-100 percent nonwhite schools. (In Atlanta, for contrast, 90 percent of black students are enrolled in 90-100 percent nonwhite schools.) However, in Minneapolis there has been a drop in the percentage of white students in the school of a typical black student:

| | 1968 | 1974 | 1986 | Net |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Minneapolis | 63.7% | 69.7% | 54.1% | −9.6% |

*Most* of the students in the school of a typical black student in Minneapolis are white, but the percentage is dropping to about half. Orfield's data is persuasive on the point that blacks and other minorities benefit from being exposed to a large number of white students, while white scores do not decline while whites are the majority. The hidden agenda here is usually not race but poverty. If you equalize the background of a child you *tend* to equalize academic achievement. A third generation American black child, living in the suburbs with middle-class college graduate parents will perform in school in ways similar to a middle-class white child, third generation American, living in suburbs with college graduate parents. This is not always true, as stereotypes about black behavior, especially about music and sports, still abound. But the odds get better through time. We need much better information on this issue, especially for gifted minority students. Given the Governor's very creative ideas for high school students taking college courses with a "fee back" arrangement, plus the exceptional use of magnets within school districts, the state could be equally creative on the issues of minority suburbanization. Effective recruiting of talented minority teachers is one point of leverage.

In sum, Minnesota schools are doing an excellent job, constantly monitoring things and tuning them up when needed, without the faddism that can accompany some state's buckshot blast at "reform." However, some small changes in student *percentages* can cause difficulties in communities not use to change. And some major changes (the increase in children in poverty for starters) may be difficult to focus on in terms of cause and effect. The strong Minnesota work ethic could blind citizens to the truth that a large percentage of those in poverty are currently working full time, but at jobs that do not allow enough income for housing.

Clearly the state's human resources need to be turned even more to the issues of ethnic diversity and poverty. In addition, the state's education bureaucracy needs to be even more in touch with the health system, the income maintenance bureaucracy, the housing and transportation systems, all of whom serve the same clients as the schools do. Minnesota is doing well in this area of departmental collaboration at the state level, but could lead the nation in a very useful way.

## MINNESOTA HIGHER EDUCATION

When the *Chronicle of Higher Education* produced its *Almanac* in September, 1988, their section on Minnesota higher education devoted three of seven paragraphs to the problems of former president Kenneth Keller. Perhaps as important as the ethical issues involved was the Keller plan for "greatness" for the University of Minnesota by raising admissions standards and recruiting for "star" faculty. The history of the university is very non-elitist, and virtually anyone with good grades in any small town in the state can attend the "U." This author remembers his freshman orientation to that institution, in which a dean of some sort told us "Getting *into* the "U." is fairly easy. It is *graduating* from the "U." that's difficult. We believe that quality is what gets out with our name on it, not what comes in." That is still a radical idea of quality, compared to the conventional "We're good because of every nine kids who want to come here we only pick one," probably the basic measurement of quality most widely used today. The decision on whether to continue in the Land Grant tradition or to begin aping Princeton is a question which will linger long after the Keller crisis is forgotten.

The University is only a part of the state's total system, which includes the Minnesota State University System, the Community College System, and a system of vocational colleges. Each system has its own governing board, usually called regents. (This author had the pleasure of speaking at one of the first meetings in which the regents of the university, state university system and community colleges met together to discuss common issues, certainly a healthy trend.)

Two other groups are important here, the Minnesota Higher Education Coordinating Board, which has done some excellent studies of policy issues affecting the higher education environment, and tends to be more influential than powerful; and the Minnesota Private College Council, which effectively represents the interests of the state's many high quality private colleges, from Carleton to Macalester.

Here is a picture of a diversified, well-financed system of higher education which can accommodate virtually every resident with the desire for more education. (There is also some good connection with the public schools which have programs for lifelong learners, such as the St. Paul Schools.) There is a good balance between public and private institutions. However, the percentage of minority students is about half that of public school enrollments, suggesting that work needs to be done on getting more minorities into, and graduated from, colleges and universities in the state. In most states, community colleges register about half of the minority student body, while in Minnesota the minority percentages in community colleges are quite low, reflecting among other things a small number of minorities in their service area. Metro State College in Minneapolis has been a model for innovation in urban community colleges for the nation for some years, particularly in meeting the needs of urban minority citizens.

If we look at degrees earned, further problems can be seen. The American Council on Education's *Fact Book on Higher Education, 1986-87*, indicates that in 1982-83, Minnesota awarded 20,664 bachelors degrees, of which 500 went to minorities and 144 went to blacks. For the

## *Minnesota Higher Education Profile, 1986-87*

| | |
|---|---|
| Public 4-year Institutions | 10 |
| Public 2-year Institutions | 23 |
| Private 4-year Institutions | 33 |
| Private 2-year Institutions | 7 |
| Total | 73 |
| Vocational Institutions | 148 |
| Full-time Faculty, Public | 4,537 |
| Full-time Faculty, Private | 2,207 |
| Full Professor Salary at Pu[illegible]ons | $35,900 |
| Full-Pro[illegible]ons | $28,300 |
| Enrollment, P[illegible] | [illegible] |
| Enrollment, [illegible] | [illegible] |
| Enrollment, [illegible] | [illegible] |
| Enrollment, [illegible] | [illegible] |
| Total Enrollment | [illegible] |
| Total Enrollment, 1970 | 160,78[illegible] |
| Full-time Enrollment | 63.9% |
| Minority E[illegible] | 4.2% |
| Minnes[illegible] | 19.0% |
| Perce[illegible] | 73.3% |
| Pe[illegible] | 26.[illegible] |
| State Funds for Higher Education Operations | $815,663,000 |
| State Spending, Need Based Student Aid | $ 60,000,000 |

(All figures are from Chronicle of Higher Education, *Almanac*, September 1, 1988, except for 1970 enrollment.)

nation in that year, about 10 percent of all bachelors degrees were awarded to minorities. In 1986, 4.2 percent of all students in higher education in Minnesota were minority, 2,969 blacks, 1,279 Hispanics, 3,682 Asian and 1,474 Native Americans, out of 226,566 total enrollment, according to the Government's *Digest of Educational Statistics, 1988*.

Given that Minnesota graduated 53,600 students from high school in 1987, and was enrolling almost that many first-year students in higher education, it seems that access to higher education in Minnesota is extremely favorable, and the diversity of institutions makes choice more positive. Faculty pay seems reasonable, and the state's investment in student financial aid can be seen nationally as exceptional. But as the demography of Minnesota becomes more complex (as it inevitably will), the higher education system may have difficulty with this complexity. It appears already that Asian-American students are moving through the Minnesota system very rapidly, as is true in most states. As in California, it is too easy to take pride in increases in minority enrollments which are heavily Asian, and which can cover lack of progress in black, Hispanic and (especially) Native American enrollments. We need to look much more carefully at various ethnic groups on a smaller scale (Cambodian rather than "Asian") to make sure that we are maximizing the potential of the members of each individual group. We need to do this, not because we are liberals, but because we are pragmatists. Whatever "excellence" in higher education means, it must have something to do with maximizing the contribution of a wide variety of its citizens.

# GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Minnesota is a state in which democracy clearly works. Most citizens are actively involved in their state, and care about education. The educational system has been well supported by citizens who are used to paying considerable taxes for *excellent* services. What follows are some issues which the state might pursue in order to make the education system even better in the future.

**1.** According to the Population Reference Bureau, there has been a doubling of Minnesota children below the poverty line. While there have been components of a solution put in place (the McKnight Foundation's work on "Achieving Self-Sufficiency on Low Income" is one such component), the state does not seem to have a strategy for stemming this increase in poor children. To do so will enhance the state's economic base as well as its equity.

**2.** As the cities diversify, Minnesota's one-third rural population may have problems in understanding what this increased diversity will mean to them. Suburbs may have some similar difficulties. This is an area in which leadership, particularly superintendents and boards, can turn a vital corner toward the future.

**3.** Similarly, Minnesota's senior citizens are a rapidly increasing part of the population. They need to become involved in school programs, or they will not vote to support school bond issues. Some places (Fairfax County, Virginia comes to mind) have been clever enough to have programs for elderly citizens administered through the schools, so that being in a public school becomes a familiar and welcome event in the life of an older person. Older citizens, like most of us, vote a straight self-interest ticket. Their self-interest is enhanced by good schools.

**4.** While the idea of a Combined Metro Area from Rochester to St. Cloud is an appealing and interesting notion, it is some distance from reality, according to this author's information. What *is* reality is the increased interaction between Minnesota and Wisconsin businesses, residences and educational systems. This needs to be kept in mind by the planners, as well as the increasing links with North Dakota. Both can be seen, now, in the cover to this publication.

**5.** Although the economy has excellent flexibility and diversity, Minnesota, like other states, is generating a large number of low-paying jobs in the service sector—maids, janitors, cashiers, waiters and waitresses and security guards. These jobs have few opportunities for advancement built in, and usually mean that a parent with a single income from a job like this cannot raise one child without going into poverty. This is a good area for the state's creative forces to work on, in that some excellent beginnings have already been made.

**6.** While Minnesota does lead the nation in terms of high school graduation rates, an additional challenge would be to lead the nation in the percentage of minority and poverty youth who complete their high school programs.

**7.** The system of higher education needs to work more creatively with the state's public school leadership, and not just through the schools of education. There are in the nation many hundreds of "academic alliances," in which college teachers of mathematics meet monthly with public school math teachers to discuss common issues. The same holds for a variety of subject areas. In Connecticut, the state's excellent private schools are now in league with the big city school systems of the state, and offer the resources of Choate during the summer to students (and faculty) from New Haven, Hartford and Bridgeport public schools. Such a program in Minnesota would do a great deal. The state's excellent resources can be combined in some new and very useful ways without increasing financial outlays. Picking winners is comparatively easy—*making* winners, kindergarten through graduate school, is the biggest challenge.

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# MINNESOTA—SUMMARY OF MAJOR POINTS

1. Minnesota is perhaps *the* state in which democracy really works. A very high percentage of voters go to the polls, the state leads the nation in the percentage of young people who graduate from high school, business leaders genuinely care about the community and state, and are responsible citizens, the legislature works harder than most to provide for the people's welfare. Behind all these good things is an energetic, well-educated citizenry. They pay fairly high taxes, and they get back excellent services, dollar for dollar.
2. That being the case, why do so few people move there? Locals will tell you it's either the weather or high taxes, but neither truly explains it. Some other hypotheses: if you want to become *really* rich, this is not the state, as income levels in Minnesota are moderate, and the state is not in the top ten in terms of increased income, 1980-1987. (New York City is still the best place.) If making lots of money, driving an extra fancy car and being recognized for it are your goals, this is not the state for you. (Alas, those do seem to be the goals of many Americans.) But if you like *both* opera and hunting and fishing, there is only one state in which all are easily available, and this is it.
3. Partly because the state has so few prisoners (at $24,000 per year to maintain, our investment in a prisoner is about seven times the investment we make as a nation in a child in school), the tax base is used for programs that have a major payoff for the citizens. The state's economy is well-diversified, as seen in the state's survival of the 1982 recession in better shape than the nation. The commitment to the Heartland values of family and the work ethic have made the state very popular for immigrants.
4. However, demographics can point out some problems on the horizon. First, the percentage of elderly citizens is increasing rapidly, and will continue to do so as few young families move into the state. Older people are less interested in the support of schools, and must be encouraged to see education as a *civic* responsibility, not just a parental responsibility. In addition, youth poverty in the state has increased in a major way since 1980, and many women are raising children by themselves without much job skill training. The state's economy continues to develop a large number of low-paying jobs for janitors, clerks, security guards, hotel maids, waiters and waitresses, etc. It is very hard to bring up a child and support a spouse on *one* income of this level. Minnesota is an overwhelmingly middle-class state, and these factors could begin to produce an "hourglass" state, with a squeezed middle, more rich and more poor. This would be a very different Minnesota, and a comprehensive program needs to be put in place to deal with it.
5. Another area of work is in equity. Minority populations are concentrated in the Minneapolis and St. Paul city limits. Movement to Minnesota's wealthy and successful suburbs has been slow. Education and housing are both key factors in this problem. Many of the components to a solution for this problem exist, but they need to be orchestrated. Similarly, the excellent system of higher education in Minnesota can work even more effectively with the public schools, just as the fine independent schools in the state can. These collaborations will benefit everyone.
6. In sum, the state has done an excellent job in dealing with issues, partly because Minnesotans have been so alike in background and values, their conflicts have been few and fairly easily resolved. The demographics make clear that the future will bring more population diversity by age, family structure, race, ethnic and country background, residence, language, wealth, and even aspiration. Because Minnesota has the capacity for environmental scanning, and the ability to translate these changes into policies and actions, Minnesota has about the best chance of any state to deal with these issues effectively. States like California and Florida can be overwhelmed by this new diversity; Minnesota has time to deal with the issues more carefully. Unlike Japan, America has always believed that pluralism is an economic and cultural advantage. During the next decade, the real test of that belief will be in states like Minnesota.